The Alarm

newsletter of Chicago Anti-Racist Action

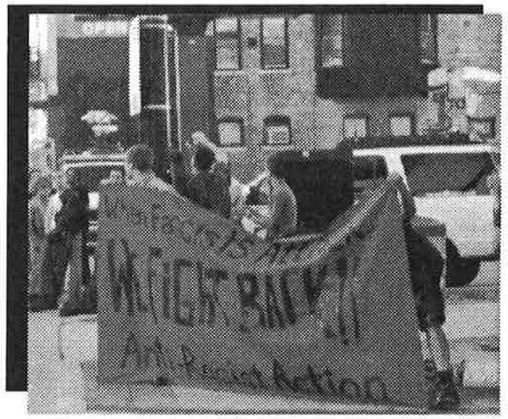
#3 • spring 2000

SMASH THE WORLD CHURCH OF THE CREATOR!

Create Anti-Racist Resistance

Anti-Racist Action takes the threat posed from neo-nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, and other racist and fascist groups very seriously. But over last 4th of July, that reality came pounding down like a hammer for all of us.

Benjamin Smith, an organizer for the white supremacist World Church of the Creator, went on a murderous shooting spree through seven communities in Illinois and Indiana. He killed two men and wounded nine others before killing himself (or possibly being killed by police). All of Smith's targets were either African-American, Asian, or Jewish.



Before the blood was dry or the bodies buried, Matthew Hale, the leader of the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) had taken to the airwaves, the newspapers, and the internet using Smith's action and the media's attention as an opportunity to promote his organization and ideology. For Hale, the only tragedy, "as far as we are concerned is the loss of one white man."

Meanwhile, Chicago Anti-Racist Action planned our response…

The World Church of the Creator

Smith's act of racist terrorism was not a first from the WCOTC. Church members have been implicated in and convicted for assaults and murders in Florida and a conspiracy to instigate a race war on the West Coast. More recently, two brothers in California who were affiliated with the WCOTC have been charged with the murder of a gay man and suspected of setting fire to three synagogues. The WCOTC's battle cry is RAHOWA–Racial Holy War–an appropriate slogan for their brutal vision to create, step by step, a world for white's only.

In 1996, Matthew Hale, a law student from East Peoria, took control of the Church and moved its headquarters to Illinois, renaming it the World Church of the Creator. Hale has led an aggressive outreach campaign aimed at getting WCOTC propaganda "into every white home in the Chicagoland area," not to mention numerous other cities throughout the country.

For ARA, the threat posed by the WCOTC is not only the acts of terrorism they seem determined to commit on a regular basis. The danger lies in their long-term role of attracting young whites and influencing broader communities of alienated white people with a program of militant white supremacy. They are in violent opposition to the kind of radical solidarity and unity with Black, Latino, and other communities that ARA sees as the starting point for any real rebellion against our common corporate and government oppressors.

Anti-Racist Action's Campaign

Just a week after the murders, ARA held an anti-fascist rally and vigil at the Matthew Shepard memorial in Boystown, Chicago's main gay district. At the rally we gave Hale and the WCOTC a public notice that this would be the kick-off for our campaign to expose and confront WCOTC organizers in their homes and neighborhoods. Their actions would not go unpunished.

Our next step was a strategy forum held at the Autonomous Zone, an anarchist activist center, where we presented our plan. Our intelligence gathering had come up with the home residences of some veterans of the Chicago neo-nazi scene who were now following or advising Matt Hale. We were also able to determine who most of the WCOTC cell in the Northshore suburbs were and where they lived. This circle, responsible for most of the propaganda drops, had, until recently, included Benjamin Smith.

Our plans for exposing and confronting WCOTC cadre was well received, and the first outing was scheduled. There was one short interruption when ARA security spotted a known nazi attempting to scope out our meeting. He was "escorted" out of the area without incident.

Outing and Routing the Nazis

In the next few months, ARA organized three outings against WCOTC cadre and advisors—Richard Mayers in Berwyn, Art Jones in Chicago's southwest side, and Justin Frogge in Glenview. All three actions followed the same general pattern. First, teams of anti-racists fanned out through the neighborhood, going door-to-door with a flyer that exposed the nazi's identity and activities. The flyer also called for the neighbors to take a stand against racism and provided ideas on how the community could unite to create an climate of diversity and resistance to prejudice.

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The Alarm comes from the title of an anarchist and revolutionary socialist newspaper published in Chicago during the late 1800s. Albert Parsons, editor of the original Alarm, was an anarchist and labor organizer who was hanged by the government in 1886 along with three of his colleagues (the Haymarket martyrs) after being framed for a bombing attack against the police.

The execution of the Chicago anarchists is still remembered by unions, political groups and grassroots organizations all over the world. We use the name The Alarm to honor its original publishers and to continue the struggle against racism and for a free society that they and others have died for.

Anti-Racist Action

What is ARA?

Anti-Racist Action is a growing movement of people deciated to exposing,opposing and confronting racism in both its far-right and institutional forms through education, action and support of broader anti-racist struggles.

ARA Chicago has been active in its current form since 1996. Since then, we have been working in schools, in our neighborhoods and our workplaces, and in the streets to show the strength of our opposition to white supremacy and fascism and demonstrate our commitment to a multi-racial, multi-cultural, sexually diverse and liberated society. ARA Chicago is part of the ARA Network, which is based on four points of unity.

ARA POINTS OF UNITY

1. We go where they go. Whenever fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring them or staying away from them. Never let the nazis have the streets.

2. Don't rely on the cops or the courts to do our work. This doesn't mean we don't ever go to court. But we must rely on ourselves to protect ourselves and to stop the fascists.

3. Non-sectarian defense of other anti-fascists.
In ARA-Net, we have lots of groups and individuals. We don't agree about everything, and we have a right to differ openly. But in this movement an attack on one is an attack on us all. We stand behind each other.

4. ARA-Net intends to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, discrimination against the disabled, the oldest and the youngest of our people. We support abortion rights and unrestricted reproductive freedom for all. We intend to win.

Other Chicago area ARA chapters:
Northside ARA • POB 146601, Chicago, IL 60616-6601,
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After covering the neighborhood, the teams rejoined to march on the nazi's house, chanting loudly and bringing a militant presence to their very doorstep. This demonstration forcefully sent the message that we know who they are, where they live, and what they're up to–and that it wouldn't go unchecked.

Our first action took place in Berwyn, where the neighbors responded well to our flyering. It became clear that Richard Mayers was well known in the mixed Latino and white community as an abusive thug; at least one local business had banned him from their premises (all of them gladly posted our flyer in their windows). When we demonstrated in front of his house, Mayer's mother (who clearly was in the dark about her son's beliefs and activities) came out to protect him, though even she was dismayed by the racist slurs he hurled at us. When Mayers attempted to pass his fascist propaganda out in the street, he was pelted with water balloons and his literature shredded.

Our second action took place on the southwest side of Chicago, targeting longtime nazi Art Jones. The majority of his neighbors were unaware and shocked to learn of his fascist history. Though Jones was home, he was too afraid to confront us and remained hidden inside. After a warning statement was read to him over a megaphone, his apartment was pelted with eggs. A polaroid photo was taken of the assembled mob and left inside a boot on his doorstep, with a note stating "This boot's for you!"

In Glenview, our flyering of Justin Frogge's neighborhood was interrupted when Frogge began driving his car around the neighborhood while wearing a ski mask and swerving at one of our leafletter teams. When we regrouped and staged a demonstration outside his house, we faced off with Frogge and his WCOTC-supporting brother Jeff. Along with a third relative, the Frogge's threatened our demonstration with their doberman, baseball bats, a golf club and an axe. The facedown went a bit awry when an unnerved neighbor from across the street came out of his house and fired a pistol in the air, ordering everyone to evacuate the scene (nazis included). As we made an orderly retreat, police swooped down on us, arresting the whole demonstration. Apparently, Glenview is not quite ready for ARA's brand of excitement.

Crisis in Decatur

Shortly before the scheduled action in Glenview, a crisis erupted in Decatur, Illinois, causing ARA to focus our campaign there.

After the Decatur school board expelled seven African-American high school students for two years (their crime was fighting at a football game), a family of one of the students invited Jesse Jackson and his Rainbow/PUSH organization down to lead community demonstrations. The heavy-handed zero-tolerance issue and Jesse's involvement began polarizing the region. Large numbers of Black folks (and a small number of whites) were backing the protests and raising other grievances against Decatur's white power structure.

There was also a strong reaction on the part of many racist whites who resented Jackson's "meddling" in Decatur. The situation was ripe for intervention by fascist groups who sought to further polarize the community and recruit from newly energized racists. Indeed, before long Matt Hale announced a WCOTC rally in Decatur to support the school board and denounce the Black protests.

For ARA, the WCOTC's entrance into this volatile situation illustrated exactly why we take them seriously. This provocation would not go unchallenged.

A week before the WCOTC rally, the American Knights of the KKK held a short-notice rally during one of Jackson's marches. ARA was unable to mobilize against this rally, which drew a hundred supporters and observers-and one lone protester. But we were ready for the WCOTC.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Richard Benedict Mayers
3745 Wisconsin
Berwyn, IL 60402
(708) 788-0598

Mayers, a WCOTC supporter, has been active in the white supremacist movement for at least 6 years (he's 27), and has worked closely with the neo-nazi America First Committee (AFC) and its founder, Art Jones. After Smith's shooting spree, Mayers was arrested for throwing WCOTC hate literature across people's lawns in several Western suburbs. Mayers has previously run for public offices such as school board's in an attempt to push his white supremacist agenda. Most recently, Mayers initiated a campaign for congressional office and placed several referendums, including one to ban interracial marriages, one to illegalize abortions of "healthy white babies" and another to launch an investigation into "international Jewry."

Arthur Joseph Jones
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"You don't want to be a Jew or a black when we come to power. There could be a lot of violence and death."—Art Jones

Art Jones has been an active propagandist in the white supremacist movement for over 25 years (he's 51). In 1977, he founded a branch of the National Socialist White People's Party in Cicero, infamous for rallying in downtown Skokie. In 1980, he founded the fascist America First Committee as his new vehicle for racist organizing. He has made several unsuccessful bids for public office in mayoral and congressional races. He currently conducts a mail-order business selling busts of Hitler and other racist figureheads. More recently, Jones has played an active support role for the WCOTC, helping them take advantage of the media outburst following Smith's rampage.

Justin Frogge
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Justin Frogge, a WCOTC member, has been one of the WCOTC's core members in the northern suburbs, where he has actively attempted to recruit and organize white youth. Along with neo-nazi skinhead Patrick Langballe, Frogge has helped to develop a crew of young racists at New Trier High School, some of whom were arrested for vandalising a park and synagogue with racist graffiti. Though he was kicked out of New Trier for his racist activities, Frogge's younger brother Jeff (a WCOTC supporter) continues to work with the crew there. In August of '99, Frogge was arrested with Benjamin Smith's ex-girlfriend Christine Weiss (also a WCOTC member) while distributing WCOTC hate literature on people's lawns. At his court appearance in November, Frogge was assisted by WCOTC leader Matt Hale.

JUSTICE HAS NOT BEEN SERVED!

Your Community Leaders are letting racist killers go free

On July 3, 1998, Las Vegas-based neo-nazis brutally murdered Lin "Spit" Newborn and Daniel Shersty, members of our community who were committed to an anti-racism campaign. Their deaths proved once and for all that the Las Vegas Valley is not immune to racist violence.

Next Monday, April 3, one man will go to trial for the murders of these civil rights activists. But a wealth of evidence directly implicates others. Last July 3 –the anniversary of the murders– neo-nazis from throughout the nation convened in the desert outside Las Vegas to celebrate the murders with a "White Power" concert. It is unacceptable that police and prosecutors have charged only one man, and allowed a conspiracy of racist killers to get away with murder!

Ask yourselves: is this justice?

Meanwhile, those responsible for Newborn' s and Shersty's murders walk the streets of our community-ready and willing to again strike violently against values and beliefs that most of us take for granted.

Lin "Spit" Newborn and Dan Shersty set an example of anti-racist unity for us all. As anti-racist skinheads, they challenged the neo-nazis who have adopted skinhead fashion. They supported the Las Vegas Unity Skins and the local chapter of the international Anti-Racist Action Network. They gave their lives in the struggle against intolerance and injustice and were targeted because of their inter-racial solidarity, their anti-racist political beliefs, and their effective organizing among the people of Las Vegas.

TAKE A STAND!

Join us in our efforts to seek justice for "Spit" and Dan. Join us to continue the struggle they were part of, to put an end to racist violence once and for all.

Call the Las Vegas Authorities today and tell them to act!
Clark County District Attorney's Office (702) 455-4277
Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (702) 795-3111

Fill out the attached coupon and lend your support to ARA and our campaign for justice.
(Paid for by the Las Vegas and nation-wide chapters of Anti-Racist Action, with support and endorsement of the other organizations:)*

[ ] I' d like some information about Anti-Racist Action (ARA) Las Vegas and the international ARA Network.

[ ] Here's my donation of $___ to help defray the cost of this advertisement and to support the efforts of ARA. Please put me on your mailing list and keep me informed. (Please make checks payable to ARA.)

[ ] I want to contribute to the trust fund for Lin Newborn' s surviving baby boy, Nicodemus. Here's my donation of $___ (Please make checks or money orders payable to "Trust Fund for Nicodemus Newborn".

Name:_____

Address:_____

City:_____State:_____Zip:_____

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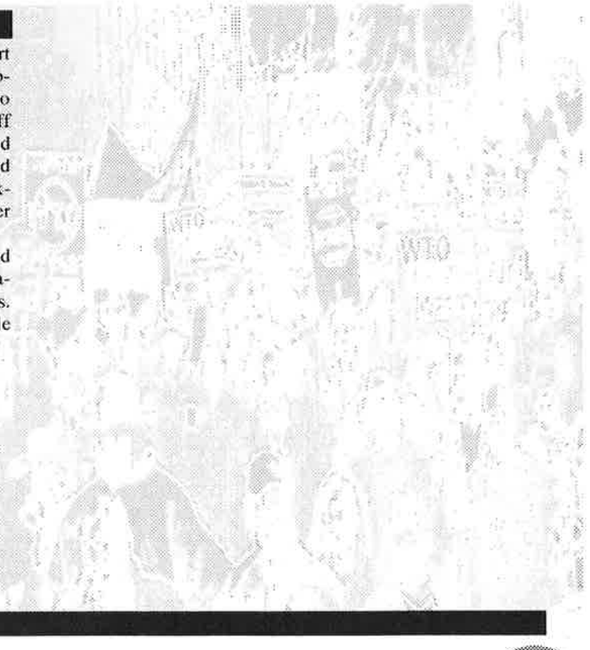
Tear off and return with your contribution to ARA Las Vegas:
ARA Las Vegas • P.O. Box 29057 • Las Vegas NV 89126-3057
lv_ara_web@hotmail.com (702) 392-7934

WTO... continued from page 6

"Ra! Ra! Go Team!" praise, but is an acknowledgment of support for the people who trashed stores whether upscale or owned by global corporations that fuck over peoples lives. This support also extends to the local poor and working people who later took stuff from these stores that normally they could never afford. And we find it repugnant that there were anti-WTO protestors who actually tried to defend these corporate stores during the unrest, sometimes attacking the militants, and later working with the cops to try and finger people for arrest.

Seattle is over, but we should not let the events that occurred fade from our memory. Instead, we should discuss, debate, and analyze, attempting to build off of any mistakes and progressions. People desire change. We desire change. And situations like Seattle show us possibilities for that desire to be realized.



DON'T ROCK THE BOAT, SINK IT!

Protesters heat up Seattle, leaving the WTO's would-be party feeling cold.

November saw the world Trade Organization (WTO) convene in Seattle, Washington. The WTO is attempting to con us (the world's poor and pissed off) into accepting its attempts to create a one world economic order (globalization) under the reigns of international corporations, organized regionally by national governments. They want us to believe that their system of economic domination, while not perfect, is somehow more democratic and productive for the world's dispossessed. Some sectors in the global ruling elite want to put a happy human face on our oppression and misery. While there still exists tendencies in these ruling structures to impose a direct rule over us (a rule reminiscent of late 19th century sweatshop conditions in which people literally live, sleep, and die at work), a new liberal tendency is taking hold that sees the way forward in capitalist management as being that of a false inclusion. This means they want us to think that those who give orders and those who take orders are somehow on the same "team," that our voices are important and should be "listened to." This liberal ploy only obscures the reality that there are differences between those who rule and those who are ruled. Well, Seattle showed that some of us are sick of being ruled and that we refuse to be "team players!"

Chicago ARA wants to extend our support to those who participated in the disruptions of the WTO. It was encouraging to see thousands of folk clogging up the streets and making it impossible for WTO representatives to get to the opening ceremonies and their meetings, seeing people who had traveled from all over the country (and some from other parts of the world) to plan and act against the companies and would-be rulers of our lives. We are heartened by the actions of all those who consciously said, "fuck reforming exploitation and oppression, we're here to smash the capitalist bastards and their ability to ruin humanity!"

However, though we identify with and feel a strong sense of solidarity with certain aspects and groups from the anti-WTO protests, we also see some ugly currents that must be challenged ...

Not One Big Happy Family:

The anti-WTO protesters did not represent one single large block of people, though many participants preferred to downplay differences in an attempt to keep a narrow focus on simply being anti-WTO. The sentiment that we all have only one major target and that we should not argue amongst ourselves is dangerous. Why? Despite the fact that the vast majority of the Seattle protesters would most likely identify with being "progressives," there were messages being put out by certain groups that had a decidedly reactionary—and with some, racist—tone. A couple of examples are evident of this.

The WTO represents globalization. This means jobs in Illinois or Indiana could be shifted to Burma or Bangladesh, and then, somewhere else in ten years. Working people continuously get ripped in the end. But the far-right and left-of-center politicos oppose things like the WTO, not because it is anti-working class in general, but because it affects a particular sector of the U.S. working-class. Politicians like Buchanan advocate a type of economic and cultural isolationism that has racist trappings (i.e., limiting immigration into the U.S., less imports, building a strong white-national centered Christian government, and so on). His message is attempting to appeal to white workers who are afraid of continued job loss and economic instability, such as rural and agricultural workers in the South and Midwest.

Similarly, tendencies exhibited by corrupt labor leaders such James Hoffa Jr., president of the Teamsters, show his anti-WTO/anti-NAFTA stances as being a cover to build his own loyal constituency. Hoffa convinced the U.S. to pass regulations that make it nearly impossible for drivers from Mexico to operate in the States under the pretext that their trucks don't conform to set standards and that they are not union—rules that have not applied to Canadian drivers who operate on equally questionable terms. Yet for a man who is supposed to represent an international union of drivers, his actions favor only a small block of workers. This block is based on U.S. nationalist politics, politics that are exclusionary and racist towards others.

Con artists like Buchanan and Hoffa are protectionist, meaning they only want to preserve the privilege of their block. They oppose globalization because it is a potential threat to that privilege and it makes a good scare tactic to whip up support against "outsiders" This isolationist and protectionist logic coincides directly with fascist (neo-nazi and white supremacist) politics. Though smaller and more marginalized, the fascists praised the anti-WTO protests as well, though they distorted the meaning of them. The fascists may be anti-globalization, but only because they want their own violent social order. Some of these fascists looked at the militant protesters and rioters as potential recruits to their fascist schemes, completely overlooking the fact that the protests "especially the riots" sought to tear up the symbols of an oppressive world capitalism that stifles everyone's humanity. Those groups who took the streets, fought the cops, and burned up the posh commercial districts were motivated by a hatred of the system of domination, exploitation and racism. While it would be hard for the fascists to change the hearts of anti-racists, their influence could potentially gain ground if left unchecked. Like the politicians and others who would sell out a real movement of change, these fascists must be combated ideologically and on the streets. We should never share the same space without confrontation.

Direct Action

One defining characteristic of the Seattle protest was the use of direct action in shutting down the WTO. Direct action is a phrase defined in a multitude of ways. For Chicago ARA, it means using tactics that maximize our potential to win by creating situations that are on our terms as much as is possible. We agree with the quote from Malcolm X "by whatever means necessary". To elaborate along these lines, we are not saying we are in favor of violence, but we do not argue for non-violence. We must act on each circumstance appropriately, but always making our foes feel our fight. This can mean engaging in actions that others may denounce as inappropriate or risky. These same accusations were thrown at various groups who fought to bring down the WTO conference in Seattle. We feel the Seattle protests were momentous. The massive civil-disobedience, street protests, and later general opposition to the cops (such as a breakaway Teamster march that went into the part of the city sealed of by the police goons) created havoc for the WTO representatives. Even more so, the groups who attacked with force the WTO and the corporate stores and centers it represents made it clear that the New World Order represented by politicians like Clinton, Gore, Bush, and Blair, can and will be resisted. To be clear, this is not a simple

continued next page

On November 21st, Chicago ARA brought several cars of anti-racists down to Decatur (an enjoyable 3-hour trip) where we joined up with other ARA folks from Indiana and Ohio. The WCOTC had obtained a permit to rally in the same park pavilion the Klan had used the weekend before. When Matt Hale and eight other WCOTC members arrived that afternoon, they found that the inside of the pavilion had been spraypainted with anti-racist slogans earlier in the day.

The ARA counterdemonstration arrived half an hour before the scheduled rally to find the fascists still setting up and the police just starting to tape off a perimeter. As the demonstration approached the pavilion, the police responded in typical fashion, attacking the group with pepper spray and metal batons to keep us back. Despite this attack, a charge by the anti-racists succeeded in landing a few blows on the WCOTC boneheads and forced them into hiding in the park's bathroom!

Justin and Jeff Frogge come out to play

While Matt Hale and the rest of the master race holed up in the outhouse, the police went wild on the protest, chasing down and pepper-spraying those they perceived to be leading the anti-racist thrust. Four people were arrested and our megaphone and banner seized as the police attempted to shut us down.

After the arrests, we were able to regroup and conduct an effective counter-demonstration–drowning out Hale with chants and speeches over our backup bullhorn, though this time firmly behind a line of Decatur's notorious SWAT team. The WCOTC drew about forty supporters to their rally, though we also made contact with anti-racists from Decatur and Urbana.

The police hit us again at the end of the protest, arresting one more for the graffitti. All five of those arrested were charged with trumped-up felonies ranging from Battery on a Police Officer and Mob Action to Criminal Damage to Property.

The Latest

While our chapter was occupied in legal defense (which led to charges being dropped or settled as misdemeanors in all cases), Matt Hale and a few of his cronies held a rally at Northwestern University. This action was primarily a media blitz, as the WCOTC attempted to garner attention so that they can recruit enough supporters and build a campus-based chapter. Without ARA's presence, the militant opposition to their rally was left in the hands of the right-wing and racist Jewish Defense League. Despite the fact that Hale put out a call for all Chicago-area WCOTC supporters to come out to their rally, only one of the locals was brave enough—17 year old WCOTC member John Schlissman, who attends Deerfield High School. None of the self-styled "creators" that we had outed showed their faces. As it turned out, the JDL bloodied all of the racists who showed (including Hale) in front of the media.

Summing Up

So far, ARA Chicago's ambitious campaign against the WCOTC has been a limited success. ARA has correctly identified the most dynamic, organized fascist threat in our area and done a good job identifying and gathering information on their most active cadre. We've proven that we can consistently organize direct actions against their members and supporters that involve new and mainly young folks while maintaining our physical and political security and integrity.

One protester was quoted as saying "They're trying to split the working class blacks and whites. They're trying to split to groups who should be working together."

The actions themselves have attempted to both reach out to broad numbers of people with an anti-fascist message and show our ability to "hit" fascist targets. When we have taken arrests, dedicated members, friends, and supporters have stepped up to make bail, find lawyers, and organize defense strategy.

On the other hand, we need to improve our outreach and involve more people in the militant anti-fascist struggle, especially more people of color. We also need to expand the core of ARA and bring in more people who are committed to planning and carrying out the work. While we have acquired the skills to surprise, outmaneuver, and "hit" the fascists, we do not yet have this same ability to handle the police. Whenever the cops have entered the equation, we have not been prepared enough to avoid (sometimes very costly) arrests.

Overall, in the six-plus months since Benjamin Smith's rampage, ARA Chicago has gained enormous experience as we carry on the struggle to deeper levels.

The 'Master Race' emerges from its bathroom hideout.

AROUND THE WORLD

Neo-Nazi Kills Anti-Racist In Mt. Washington, PA

Michael Stehle, a member and recruiter for the National Alliance, was charged with the murder of anti-racist skinhead Brian Hartzell on Feb. 10th. The National Alliance is one of the largest and most influential neo-nazi organizations in the U.S. The Alliance's leader, William Pierce, authored the "Turner Diaries", a fictional account of a white supremacist revolution that was used by Timothy McVeigh as the blueprint for the Oklahoma City bombing. Pierce recently purchased Resistance Records, the largest distributor of white power music in the U.S. Stehle, who has a long history as a neo-nazi skinhead, has also authored record reviews for Resistance Records' glossy magazine.

According to the police and FBI, Brian Hartzell and a companion broke into Stehle's home and held his roommates at gunpoint. Hartzell was known as an anti-racist who would confront racist skinheads in his community; the police speculate that Hartzell invaded Stehle's home because Stehle had beat up a friend of his. Stehle apparently responded by shooting and killing Hartzell; his companion fled. In addition to piles of racist literature, police also found an AK-47 and other weapons in Stehle' house.

Arson Destroys Swedish White Power Music Studio

"Every fire needs a little bit of help."—Chumbawamba

The recording studios owned and operated by the "viking-rock" band Ultima Thule in Nykping, Sweden were completely destroyed by fire sometime early on the morning of Thursday the 10th of February. Ultima Thule was at the forefront of the white power music wave that spread across Sweden and Scandinavia in the early 1990's. The band members have their political roots within the fascist parliamentary party, Sverigedemokraterna (the Sweden Democrats). In later years, Ultima Thule has been involved in organizing the yearly white power music festival, Holmgng, held outside of the western Swedish town of Bors. This festival has attempted to create links between the northern European nazi movement and nationalistic motorcycle and car clubs.

The extensive fire destroyed not only the bands recording studio and instruments, but all of their master tapes, including those completed for an upcoming album. All post-order merchandise was also destroyed in the blaze.

AROUND THE NETWORK

Chicago ARA is part of a network of over 100 youth-based ARA chapters across the continental US and Canada. To find out who the regional contact in your area is, contact us!

ARA Disrupts Klan Rally in Kentucky

On December 18, 1999, a small but vocal contingent of ARA members from Kentucky and Indiana attended a rally in Middlesboro, KY, by Jeff Berry's American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. When the Klan showed up late for their rally, they discovered much to their detriment that they didn' t have a loudspeaker—but ARA did! The ARA members kept up a stream of creative chants that drowned out the Klan, and passed the mic around to local people who were not shy at all about insulting, berating and otherwise haranguing the Klan (from devout Christians to war veterans to foul-mouthed grandmothers)! The Klan's rally was effectively hijacked, and many of their supporters ended up leaving early in disgust!

ARA Raises Opposition in Las Vegas

ARA Las Vegas and other chapters have prepared an ad to be published in the popular Las Vegas weekly City Life regarding the case of Lin "Spit" Newborn and Daniel Shersty, two antiracist activists affiliated with ARA who were murdered by neo-nazi boneheads on July 3rd, 1998 in Las Vegas. The text of the ad, to be run the week before the trail begins for the single neo-nazi charged with the murders, is on page 7.

AROUND CHICAGO

White Power Music – Turn It Down!

The Center for New Community, a local organization that monitors and documents racist groups, has announced the launching of a new Turn It Down campaign against white power music. "White power music has become the most significant recruiting tool for organized white supremacists—it has succeeded in infiltrating numerous youth subcultures and creating the cultural space for fascism within those scenes."

The Center is offering a new Resource Kit as part of this campaign, including a comprehensive list of white power bands, labels, distributors and websites; resource materials for teachers, parents and the record industry; and a detailed report: Soundtracks to the White Revolution: White Power Music in the U.S. You can get more information on their campaign and order the resource kit from www.turnitdown.com or CNC, PO Box 34606, Chicago, IL 60634.

Racism is in the Institution

Public Safety Announcement!—The anti-loitering law is back, new and improved and complying with constitutional standards. During a press conference at a Logan Square grammar school, Mayor Daley attempted to sing the praises of the new law, backed by the local alderman, CAPS members, and various other supporters. But this attempt by the state to flex its authority was drowned out by the chanting and yelling of some of the same hooligans the state is trying to protect the citizenry from. Members of the Community Justice Initiative, a coalition group, and individual activists raised their voices in opposition. Daley was humiliated as the disruption was covered on the evening news.

But don't you worry, good citizens. The state is seeking to remove these trouble-making, unsightly groups of young people from our streets, especially people of color. That's right, the open-minded and objective officers of the Chicago PD will use their awesome psychic powers to determine which groups of people are involved in illegal activities. This law gives cops discretion to define whether groups of three or more are engaged in drug or gang activity or criminally trying to "assert control" in a given area. Obviously, this law will be focused in 'target' areas—code for communities of color and poor areas. Will the initial opposition of the youth at the press conference grow into a larger stumbling block for the state? No need to fear, upstanding citizens! Just avoid those target areas and you'll be safe!

Those unsightly poor

In line with city's wave of gentrification—the process where unsightly poor and working class folx are moved out so that privileged white folx can move in and cash in on the real estate—the Chicago Public Housing authorities are continuing their destruction of several public housing projects. Cabrini Green is to lose 80% of its current units, while the Southside Robert Taylor homes have already lost several buildings. Who needs eyesore housing projects when we can replace them with $300,000 condos, strip malls and corporate chain stores?!

As for the former residents of that public housing, don't worry about them coming into your neighborhood. The state has a solution to possible homelessness: the free market. Why, yes, a little artificial scarcity to make life a little simpler. People whose homes are destroyed are given section 8 vouchers (vouchers for subsidized housing) to compete with others for rare affordable and low income housing in the private market place. And since the city would rather have strip malls than affordable housing, these folks are being pushed out further and further from the city. Forget those extended families that people in public housing have come to rely on— it's time to force them into the nuclear family units of the twenty-first century!

Chicago ARA Year in Review

Bringing the 90's to an end seems a good time for Chicago ARA to take an inventory of where we are at. There's a lot of discussion about how we want to expand and what new projects we want added to our mix. One good way to evaluate our effectiveness as a group is to take a good hard look at what we've done in the past and build from what's been learned through those experiences. So in the interest of moving forward, here's a look at the events that shaped the past year...

February

- ARA (Northside & Chicago) protests and hands out flyers to shoppers outside Record Breakers in Hoffman Estates, a music store known for selling white power music. Later, ARA members contacted music suppliers in an effort to get the business boycotted until the white power music is taken off the shelf.
- ARA and the Emergency Clinic Defense Coalition (ECDC) band together to form support for abortion providers under attack from the religious right (namely an unfortunate group called HOGPI—Helpers of God's Precious Infants).
  ARA and ECDC hold a proactive demonstration against HOGPI outside St. Joseph's Church on Chicago's near north side. The demo includes speeches, pamphlets promoting the great services of the nearby Planned Parenthood, fire-eating by the Lesbian Avengers, marching and loud ruckus.

June

- 500 demonstrators (including ARA members) march up Roosevelt Road demanding justice for victims of police brutality—particularly in response to the slaying of Latanya Haggerty by Chicago Police. One ARA member helped organize a caravan of UPS trucks to participate in the protest, waving "Stop Police Brutality" signs.
- ARA and ECDC round up a rowdy posse to counter-demonstrate against the Cardinal and 300 of his religious cronies (mostly HOGPI) as they swarm the Pan Americano abortion clinic in Humboldt Park. These people wish to "pray away" a woman's right to decide the fate of her body, but they will not go unchecked!

July

- ARA holds a rally in response to the Benjamin Smith shooting spree (see cover article for more details).

August

- ARA holds a forum about the World Church of the Creator featuring Devin Burghardt, a right-wing monitor and analyst from the Center for New Community.

September

- ARA confronts WCOTC supporter Richard Mayers in his Berwyn neighborhood. ARA attempts to confront the cowardly neo-nazi Art Jones in his southwest side 'hood, but he's too scared to come out.

October

- ARA holds a Punk Against Racism show at the Fireside featuring Latino hardcore band Sin Orden, Polish punks No Comment and punk rockers Secret Agent Bill.
- ARA Chicago member organizes forum addressing police brutality as it relates to queers at the Church of Open Door.
- ARA participates in October 22 demo against police brutality.
- ARA participates in the march and rally against queer bashing that took place on the one-year anniversary of the brutal murder of Matthew Shepard. Hundreds of protesters visited several of the spots in Chicago where hate crimes have occurred (one being directly across the street from a police station).
- Chicago ARA pulls off the ARA network's annual continental conference—3 days of workshops, forums, food, parties, and sleeping on floors. This year's conference had around 300 attendees representing over 40 ARA chapters (a new record in chapter attendance!) and anti-fascists from across the globe!
- March for Mumia! ARA members participate in a massive march in downtown Chicago (tying up intersections during rush hour) for the release of Mumia Abu-Jamal after the signing of his death warrant. Strangely enough—though hundreds participated, the rally got absolutely no media coverage whatsoever!

November

- ARA crashes a WCOTC rally in Decatur, forcing the racists to hide in the bathroom and behind police. ARA and supporters raise over $4,000 (in two days!) to pay off the outrageous bonds thrown at anti-racist activists by Decatur's "finest".

December

- ARA confronts WCOTC member Justin Frogge at his home in Glenview.

January

- Through hard work, a lot of meetings and road trips, and kickass support from friends and comrades, ARA sees the dismissal of 20 misdemeanor charges (from the Glenview case). The 9 felonies and 8 misdemeanors against the Decatur 5 are settled as a plea of a misdemeanor apiece and fines.

ARA would like to send a BIG THANK YOU to the individuals who donated their time, energy, and money to the Decatur and Glenview cases—it was so-o-o appreciated!!! We'd also like to send thanks to all the people who've come out to the events to fight the fascists with us!

And to those of you that have not come out—why not? Racism will not go away by being ignored! There's a whole new year ahead of us, and we'd love some fresh new minds to help us work out our upcoming projects. Just give us a call and get hooked up.